



Employee Handbook

2023

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II. PREFACE

At-Will Employment

This Employee Handbook (“Handbook”) does not constitute an express or implied contract between Texas Criminal Defense Group Firm (“TCDG” or “the firm”) and its employees, job applicants, or other persons. Texas Criminal Defense Group or the employee can terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause.

Handbook Modifications

Texas Criminal Defense Group reserves the right to modify any portion of this Handbook at any time, with or without notice to employees. This Handbook supersedes all previous versions of the Employee Handbook.

III. WORK BEHAVIOR

Conduct and Attitude

All employees are expected to demonstrate courteous soft skills with an attitude that reflects those soft skills while at work. Every employee must always be respectful and professional in interactions with other co-workers, management, attorneys and clients. It is imperative for you to be impartial in dealing with those we serve. It is an expectation that you display politeness, tact, and a helpful demeanor to contribute to the positive image of Texas Criminal Defense Group employees. As a representative of Texas Criminal Defense Group, employees are required to use their best efforts to always perform assigned tasks promptly and efficiently.

Outside Employment

It is expected that your job at Texas Criminal Defense Group will be your principal employment. Outside employment that is or could be perceived as incompatible with the duties and responsibilities of your position is prohibited. You must get advance written approval from a partner before engaging in any outside employment.

Association with Outside Firm

Speaking to any competitor firm of Texas Criminal Defense Group regarding possible employment or regarding office practices and procedures is prohibited.

Case Referral

Employees are expected to refer all cases to Texas Criminal Defense Group for handling.

Substance Abuse

Abusing any substance, whether legal or illegal, is prohibited.

Gossip

Casual or unconstrained verbal or written conversation or reports about co-workers, typically involving details that are not confirmed as being true, is prohibited while at work. All employees should contribute to a constructive working environment, relaying feedback appropriately and to the correct person. Any instances of gossip and/or spreading of rumors will not be tolerated.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Office Hours

All employees should arrive to work on time, prepared to start their designated work immediately. Employees required to report to work late or leave early must communicate these requirements as soon as reasonably possible to their direct supervisor and relay their plan to adjust their schedule accordingly to ensure that they meet their minimum hours work requirement. If a salaried employee does not work their minimum 40-hour work week requirement, Personal Time Off (“PTO”) will be deducted from their accrued bank to make up any difference. If the salaried employee does not have accrued PTO to apply, this will be considered their responsibility to communicate with their direct supervisor day(s) and time(s) in that same work week that they will be adding to ensure their hours worked expectations are met.

Clocking In and Out for Work

No employee shall ever adjust their worked time clock for themselves unless the phone system can confirm this as worked time. Likewise, no employee shall ever clock another employee in and/or out. Each employee is responsible for clocking in and out at their own respective times, and this action should not be done on behalf of another employee. Doing so may result in immediate termination of either, or both, employees.

If a valid adjustment is needed to the time clock, then you must submit a timesheet (*see form attached*) to your supervisor within 3 business days of the error so that your time may be corrected. If there are time clock issues, the employee aware and/or facing the issue must immediately notify their supervisor.

- Each hourly employee must approach the time clock 4 times a day:
 - Clock in when you arrive to work
 - Clock out for lunch
 - Clock in after returning from lunch
 - Clock out when you have completed work for the day

A Reimbursement Form for your time and/or expenses must be submitted if expenses and labor occurs outside the office. Please note that the activity for which you seek reimbursement must be approved by a supervisor before it is done. If you are accompanying an attorney at court and will not be in the office, this must be approved by

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a supervisor in advance. If you are doing any other work outside of the office, you must have supervisor approval beforehand.

Lunch and Other Breaks

Based on the high volume of telephone calls received by the firm, the call agent staff may have over-lapping lunch times according to the schedule.

- **Lunch Breaks for call agent staff:**
 - Lunch breaks are no longer than 30 minutes.
 - If call agents need to take longer lunch breaks, prior supervisor approval is required.
 - If you are returning late from your lunch break, notify your Supervisor.
- **Phone Breaks for call agent staff:**
 - Phone breaks should be taken after making an effort to ensure no other person is on a phone break.
 - Phone breaks should be limited and kept to a minimum as a courtesy to your co-workers.
 - If a call agent takes an extended phone break, any duration 15 minutes or longer, management reserves the right to subtract this time from the employee's paid time.
- **Smoke Breaks**
 - Texas Criminal Defense Group does not approve, authorize, or provide pay for the reason of 'smoke breaks' during working hours. In-office employees shall never smell of cigarette smoke at work.

Reimbursement for Gas and Other Expenses

The firm will reimburse salaried employees for travel expenses outside the city limits of their designate home office. The firm will reimburse non-salaried employees for travel expenses to a location other than the employee's designated home office.

Attorneys will not be reimbursed for travel expenses to and from their home and the Attorney's designated home office or the main courthouses within the city limits of their designated home office. If an attorney lives closer to an outside court than their designated home courthouse and is required to go to that courthouse for that particular day's work, then the travel expenses will not be reimbursed. Otherwise, the attorney will calculate the mileage traveled to outside courts by using the distance from the Texas Criminal Defense Group office or attorney's home, whichever is shorter, to the outside court.

For the measured distance between the office and the appropriate courthouse (or other location), refer to Google Maps. Travel distance will be reimbursed at a rate chosen by partners and is subject to change at any time. Email your mileage in electronic format no more than once per month to your supervisor for reimbursement. Mileage will be determined as the distance from the office to the destination with return to the office; in the

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event employee's home is closer to the destination than the office then employee will use the distance from employee's home in determining mileage. All employees must maintain and submit a mileage log to a partner for approval to receive reimbursement.

Texas Criminal Defense Group will also reimburse employees for parking expenses at courts.

Dress Code

It is the policy of the firm that each employee's dress, grooming, and personal hygiene should be appropriate to the work situation. Employees are expected to present a professional, businesslike image at all working times, unless otherwise determined and communicated by your direct supervisor for instances such as, but not limited to, office-wide casual days. At its discretion, the firm may allow employees to dress in a more casual fashion than is normally required. On these occasions, employees are still expected to present a neat appearance with similarly appropriate clothing.

In-office employees are expected to dress in a manner that is representative of the firm expectations. Attire that is not appropriate includes, but is not limited to, suggestive attire, baseball hats, and similar items that do not present a business-like appearance. Tops and bottoms should be appropriately fitting and appropriately worn. Grooming expectations include hair reflective of being clean and maintained. Be mindful that others in office may have allergies or are susceptible to irritation with strong scents. To maintain a healthy working environment for all employees, avoid wearing strong smelling cologne or perfume.

Work At Home employee's clothing and grooming are required to present a professional image while on Virtual conferences.

Attorneys must wear a suit (with tie) or other similar "business" attire when attending all court appearances. Attorneys should have a suit or sport coat with them at all times while at court. If an attorney is only scheduled for office duty, "business casual" attire should be worn. If an attorney is not scheduled for court, the attorney is required to have immediate access to "business" attire. Should another attorney become ill or have an emergency, all staff attorneys are subject to being called on for court coverage, and thus must have immediate access to "business" attire.

Tardiness

Hourly employees arriving after their designated start time and/or not prepared to start work immediately without advance communication with their direct supervisor, are considered tardy. If an employee incurs 2 tardies within one rolling 30-day period, this will result in a verbal warning. If an employee incurs 3 tardies within one rolling 30-day period, this would result in a written warning. Any instances of tardiness past these amounts will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, subject to, but not limited to, separation of employment. Instances of leaving early should be avoided, or limited. If an employee

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leaves work early 2 instances within one rolling 30-day period, they will be issued a verbal warning. If an employee leaves work early 3 instances within one rolling 30-day period, they will be issued a written warning. Any instances of leaving work early past these amounts will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, subject to, but not limited to, separation of employment.

Illness/Injury and Physician's Note

All medical reasons for missing work must be documented in email form from the employee to their direct supervisor, provided in a timely manner, not to exceed 72 hours unless otherwise deemed by the nature of the illness/injury. Employees should attach dated documentation signed by a licensed medical professional, if applicable. Employees are expected to return to work as soon as possible as outlined by medical documentation, if applicable. Any falsification of documentation is grounds for immediate termination. Any missed work for illness/injury that a medical professional is not consulted for must be thoroughly documented in email form, including availability for returning to work.

Further, any employee who is unable to work their complete scheduled shift due to an illness or injury must inform his/her supervisor of any work not yet completed.

Inclement Weather Policy

Texas Criminal Defense Group will make every effort to maintain normal work hours even during inclement weather.

In-Office employees will be expected to get to work if reasonably safe to do so. Any employee who is unable to report to work should communicate with their supervisor and report their absence at least 30 minutes prior to the start of their work day. Employees should monitor the weather and make reasonable efforts to get to work if reasonably safe to do so if weather conditions improve. On days when weather conditions worsen after employees have reported to work In-Office, employees may leave to the extent they believe it is unreasonably safe to stay at work any longer. If leaving, employee shall notify their supervisor.

All attorneys must be accessible to ensure that court coverage and cancellations are appropriately handled.

Work At Home employees are required to notify their direct supervisor as soon as possible of any adverse weather events that may put their safety, home, or ability to work at risk. Employees are required to report any weather related outages to their direct supervisor as soon as possible.

Voting

All attempts should be made to vote before scheduled work, after scheduled work, during your lunch break, or on your scheduled days off. If you have exhausted all listed options for voting, discuss schedule adjustment possibilities with your direct supervisor.

Work Space

In-Office employees should have a presentable workspace that is organized and free of clutter. All paperwork containing confidential information should be appropriately stored at a pre-determined location when not being worked on, including during lunch times and outside of working hours. The appropriate storing location should be discussed between each employee and their direct supervisor.

Work At Home employees should maintain a quiet, distraction free work environment. Background noise should be avoided. Any confidential information that is heard, gathered, seen, or discussed should not be documented, used, referenced, or repeated outside of approved working reasons.

Following Office Procedure

In order to provide superior service to our clients and operate our business in the most efficient manner possible, it is necessary that all employees strictly follow all policies and processes. Most often, these procedures are communicated through written material, however, the employee may also receive verbal instructions. If there is confusion or you have questions, you are responsible for seeking immediate clarification. Further, you should not make any deviation or change from procedure, no matter how small or temporary, without discussing with your supervisor for approval.

Trade Secrets

In order to adequately perform your job duties at Texas Criminal Defense Group, it will be necessary to provide you certain proprietary information. Any information that you are provided as an employee is strictly the property of Texas Criminal Defense Group and shall not be disclosed to anyone outside the employment of Texas Criminal Defense Group under any circumstances.

Communication with Non-Clients and Fee Splitting

It is improper for an employee to call any individual to solicit legal services if that person has not previously contacted our firm. Likewise, it is improper to split a legal fee, or otherwise pay a contingent fee, to a person not licensed to practice law. Therefore, if any employee is aware of these acts occurring, they should immediately notify their supervisor.

Availability by Cell Phone and Access to Transportation

It is expected that all attorneys and other salaried employees will be accessible by cell phone. It is further expected that all **In-Office** employees, salaried and non-salaried, will maintain reliable transportation.

Work At Home employees are also expected to maintain reliable internet, electricity, and the maintenance of their personal computer(s).

If a staff member is provided a cell phone by Texas Criminal Defense Group, the staff member is expected to safeguard the phone and notify the supervisor of any damage, loss or other issues to the cell phone. Employee must return any provided cell phone upon termination of employment; failure to do so will result in \$200 being subtracted from employee's final paycheck.

Security

Security is every In-Office employee's responsibility. Please ensure that all doors are locked if you are the only employee in the office. If you are the last employee to leave the office for the day, please ensure that all doors are locked and lights are turned off per office closure process. For any security issues, you should immediately contact the office building personnel as explained in office process or 911, if necessary.

Office Keys

Keys will be given to all full-time In-Office employees. Passkeys will only be given to employees who need access to the building outside of usual business hours. The employee is responsible for returning all provided key and/or passkey upon termination of employment. If the key and/or passkey are not returned, then a \$50 fee for each item will be taken out of the employee's last paycheck to cover cost for replacement(s). Management also reserves the right to withhold the employees last paycheck until key(s) are returned. If a key or passkey is lost while employed, the employee must immediately notify a supervisor. At no time should an employee make any copies of keys or passkeys without direction from their immediate supervisor.

Company Property

Any property of the firm must be returned at the request of management. This request can be made at any point during employment or at the time that employment has ended.

Cash Intake

In order to adequately perform their duties, some employees may handle cash payments on behalf of Texas Criminal Defense Group.

Employee understands and agrees all cash payments received by Employee are property of Texas Criminal Defense Group and, under no circumstances, shall Employee use these funds for personal use or commingle these funds with Employee's personal funds. Employees further acknowledge they will make every effort to safeguard these funds in a safe and secure location.

Employees who accept any cash payments are expected to be responsible with those funds. Any carelessness in handling of money and/or instances of cash discrepancies may result in disciplinary action. Any unaccounted for funds will be removed from an Employee's final check.

Music

It is acceptable for Employee's to play music at their desk as long as it does not interfere with client relations (either in office or over the phone) nor disturbs others. Regardless, music must be kept at an acceptable volume and any profanity or offensive language is strictly prohibited.

V. WAGES AND SALARIES

All salaried employees are required to work a minimum of 40 hours during the week. Employees are discouraged from discussing their salary, hourly pay or other incentives, including any bonuses, with others to protect wage confidentiality.

Paydays, Pay Periods, Paychecks

Employees will be paid between the 5th–7th and the 20th–22nd of each month. For work dates between the 1st and 15th of the month, generally payment will be received by the 20th of the same month. For work dates between the 16th and end of the month, generally payment will be received by the 5th of the following month. Please note that certain banks will hold wire transfer payments 1 to 2 business days if payment is sent over a weekend. If a payday falls on either a weekend or holiday, payday may be the following business day. Texas Criminal Defense Group will not release paychecks to other individuals without permission of the employee.

If an employee's paycheck is lost or stolen, it is the employee's responsibility to report this fact immediately to a supervisor. The employee will be required to sign a statement certifying that the paycheck was lost or stolen. Texas Criminal Defense Group will issue

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a replacement check to the employee after the check has been verified to not have been cashed by the bank and a stop payment has been issued to the bank. A replacement check will take 7 to 10 days to reissue depending on facts and circumstances surrounding the disappearance of the paycheck and the ability of the bank to issue a stop payment.

Payroll Calculation

Payroll is calculated by your approved and confirmed worked time, respective to your role. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure accuracy of worked time following appropriate adjustment process as outlined in this handbook.

Overtime

Hourly employees will be paid time and a half for any time worked that exceeds 40 hours per week. Overtime requests must be pre-approved by a supervisor by submitting an Overtime Approval form (*see attached form*). The Overtime Approval form must state, in detail, the reason for overtime. Failure to do so may result in the request being declined. The completed overtime approval sheet must be scanned and emailed to your Supervisor. You should make all efforts to log out of work at the end of your approved scheduled working time. Any unforeseen business needs to work overtime, such as an extended call with a Client, should be limited and immediately communicated to the employee's direct supervisor. An Overtime Approval form must also be submitted as soon as possible with thorough details including, but not limited to, Client name and case number, if applicable.

Time Off

Employees should request time off using the "Time Off Request" (*see form attached*). The completed form must be scanned and emailed to your Supervisor. Every Employee is responsible for ensuring their job responsibilities are either completed, or have been communicated to their direct supervisor in preparation for taking time off. For any unplanned time off, Employee should immediately notify their Supervisor as soon as they are reasonably able. It is the responsibility of the direct Supervisor to ensure that tasks are adequately handled when they know that an Employee is out.

Medical and Other Non-Emergency Appointments

Every effort should be made to schedule medical and other non-emergency appointments on days other than Mondays. Additionally, medical and other non-emergency appointment time off requests should be limited to half day requests. For all appointments, Employees must communicate their anticipated work arrival and work departure times.

Bonuses

Texas Criminal Defense Group may offer employee incentives in the form of a bonus which are a voluntary addition to employee's pay. Any bonus programs or bonus payments are completely voluntary and subject to change at any time. Further, Texas Criminal Defense Group may choose to not pay a bonus at its sole discretion. Being terminated or resigning without proper notice, as stated in this handbook, will automatically forfeit any bonus.

VI. EMPLOYEE EVALUATION AND HOLIDAYS

Probationary Period

All employees will have a 90 day probationary period starting from the hire date in which the employee will be evaluated on properly following office guidelines and policies, appropriate implementation of processes and procedures, and performing their job in a satisfactory manner.

Anniversary Date of Employment

For full-time and part-time employees, the date of hire is considered the anniversary date of employment. The anniversary date will be used to calculate employee eligibility for holidays, PTO and other employee benefits. The anniversary date of employment will also be considered for purposes of determining employee priority related to scheduling holidays, PTO, promotions, transfers, and retrenchment.

Holidays

As a general practice, the firm observes holidays in the following manner:

| <u>HOLIDAY</u> | <u>DAY</u> | <u>STAFF REQUIREMENTS</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Memorial Day | Mon | Office Closed |
| Independence Day | Jul 4 | Office Closed |
| Labor Day | Mon | Office Closed |
| Thanksgiving Day | Thu | Office Closed |
| Day after Thanksgiving | Friday | Office Closed |
| Christmas Eve | Dec 24 | Office Closed |
| Christmas Day | Dec 25 | Office Closed |
| New Year's Day | Jan 1 | Office Closed |

Scheduling, including during holidays, will be based on the needs of the firm. Deciding factors of scheduling include, but are not limited to, tenure and tasks required to be completed. If an employee is not required to work due to office closure, the above holidays will be paid holidays.

VII. PAID TIME OFF AND OTHER EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Texas Criminal Defense Group understands that employees require time off for a variety of reasons and it is our goal to be as lenient as possible in approving time off requests, considering the workload of the office and fairness to other employees.

Employees are encouraged to use provided PTO days, as unused PTO days do not carry over past the employment anniversary date and any unused PTO days will be forfeited. Further, no PTO will be paid out if employee leaves the firm. If employee leaves the firm without giving adequate notice (See *Resignation* section), then all unused PTO and bonuses will be forfeited by employee. If at any time an employee exceeds the number of PTO provided days currently earned, then the firm will deduct the over used PTO days from the employees last paycheck in the rate of 1/20 of the amount of monthly salary for salaried employees and 8 hours of regular pay for hourly employees.

Paid Time Off (“PTO”)

All employees receive 10 PTO days front loaded for use after 90 days of employment through the end of that employment year. No PTO days may be used in first 90 days of employment. After 1 year of continuous employment, 10 PTO days plus an additional 5 PTO days will be front loaded for use on the employment anniversary, totaling 15 PTO days available to be used. After 2 years of continuous employment and onward each year on the anniversary of employment, 20 PTO days will be front loaded for use.

For salaried employees, PTO may be utilized in half days; accordingly, any salaried employee working less than 4 hours in a particular day will have .5 PTO days subtracted from their paycheck. Hourly employees will have the actual hours missed deducted from available PTO. For any employee, all PTO will first be deducted from the employee’s accrued PTO bank prior to discounting employee’s paycheck for missed time.

Submitting Request for Time Off

Because Texas Criminal Defense Group is primarily a litigation law firm, attorneys are requested to utilize at least half of their allotted PTO during dates in which the court is not conducting trials. Employees who graduate from hourly to salaried positions will have an anniversary date for provided PTO as the date when the salaried position began. If employee who is eligible for PTO misses work for any reason and has yet to designate election of PTO, then any available PTO will be automatically used for days missed.

Any requests for time off must be submitted to a supervisor for approval. All non-emergency time off requests must be made by submitting a 'PTO Form Request' (see form attached) at least 2 weeks in advance for consideration of approval. No more than 10 consecutive days may be requested off, unless otherwise approved for consideration by a supervisor with at least 8 weeks advance notice. The Supervisor may ask that a request have an accompanying outline of tasks that will need to be completed in the employees absence and the person(s) who will be responsible for completion. Requests are not automatically approved, and are granted or denied based on the needs of the firm.

If an employee exhausts their allotted PTO during the year and requires additional leave, the employee must take non-paid leave and their paycheck will be reduced accordingly. For unscheduled PTO (such as in the event of illness), employees must contact their supervisor as soon as possible and advise them of their intent to take PTO.

Licensing Dues and CLE

Texas Criminal Defense Group will reimburse attorneys and paralegals for annual Texas Bar Dues and Attorney Occupation Taxes. Continuing Legal Education ("CLE") courses may be reimbursed if the course is approved by a partner. Additional firm-related expenses may be reimbursed as approved by a partner.

Jury Duty

Texas Criminal Defense Group will excuse work day schedules for all employees summoned to serve jury duty. Any employee with a tenure of greater than 1 year will be paid at full salary or hourly rate for the first 2 days required for jury duty, per calendar year. Should jury duty exceed 2 days, an unpaid leave will be issued to the employee for the duration of the jury duty. Time absent to serve jury duty will not be deducted from an employee's accumulated PTO. In order to be eligible for paid jury duty, Texas Criminal Defense Group employees must give notice of the jury summons date at least 2 weeks in advance (*see attached form*).

VIII. DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT & EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Discrimination/Harassment

Texas Criminal Defense Group is committed to a workplace free from harassment and/or discrimination based on an employee's race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age or any other prohibited criteria. Should you feel you have been subjected

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to unlawful harassment and/or discrimination, please report your concerns *immediately* in writing to a partner. Upon receipt of an employee complaint, Texas Criminal Defense Group will undertake a prompt and thorough investigation. Although Texas Criminal Defense Group will take appropriate steps to maintain the confidentiality during the investigation, such confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Texas Criminal Defense Group reserves the right to engage a neutral third-party to conduct investigations. Upon completion of the investigation, Texas Criminal Defense Group will undertake appropriate remedial measures as necessary.

Equal Employment

Texas Criminal Defense Group is committed to equal employment for all employees. All employment decisions are made without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, or any other prohibited criteria.

IX. DISCIPLINE

Discipline Policy

Employees may be subject to discipline in the event of improper and/or inappropriate conduct. Any instances of improper and/or inappropriate conduct may result in verbal or written warnings, suspension without pay for up to five days, or discharge. Disciplinary action is at the discretion of the firm.

Dismissal for Cause

Certain acts of an egregious nature may result in immediate discharge. Employees discharged for cause receive no severance or accrued vacation pay. The following offenses are deemed to warrant immediate dismissal, even if such an act constitutes an employee's first violation of policy:

- Making a false statement in the employment application or pre-employment physical form;
- Work behavior and conduct that does not create a positive image for Texas Criminal Defense Group.
- Theft, or removing from the premises without proper authorization, any property of Texas Criminal Defense Group and/or the property of another employee;
- Instances of failing to notify a supervisor and/or partner about unscheduled absences according to the provisions set forth in this Handbook;
- Fighting, or attempting bodily injury to another employee, visitor, or client;

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- Using abusive or threatening language to fellow employees or clients;
- Sexual and/or racial harassment/discrimination;
- Being under the influence of alcohol or any narcotic;
- Insubordination and/or refusing to carry out instructions;
- Gambling on firm property;
- Providing information of a confidential nature to unauthorized personnel;
- Unauthorized possession of firearms or explosives on premises;
- Any conduct detrimental to a client;
- Attempting to obtain money from the firm on the basis of false statements;
- Failure to maintain proper licensure, registration, or certification required by state, federal, or local law;
- Conduct occurring outside the office place that would reflect poorly on the integrity or image of the firm in the opinion of the partners;
- Use of the systems, computer(s), internet for non-work related purposes;
- Taking any client information, files, firm documentation or any other business documents off work premises without expressed consent from management. This includes electronic transmission of documents as well as physically removing documents;
- Sharing any client, employee or work practice information with any competitor firm of Texas Criminal Defense Group.
- Speaking to a competitor firm of Texas Criminal Defense Group regarding possible employment;
- Referring cases to another attorney or law firm of case types that Texas Criminal Defense Group handles;
- Dishonesty or untruthful statements to co-workers, or supervisors in carrying out job duties.

Grievance Procedure

Any employee who believes that they have been treated unfairly may file a written grievance. Written grievances must be submitted to a partner. Upon receipt of a grievance, the firm may conduct an investigation and take corrective action when required.

Resignation

All attorneys, and other salaried employees, who voluntarily resign from the firm are asked to provide the firm at least three (3) weeks written notice. All hourly employees who voluntarily resign from the firm are asked to provide the firm at least two (2) weeks written notice. Failure to provide the requested notice will result in all unused PTO and bonuses being forfeited. Texas Criminal Defense Group does not offer severance pay to employees. Anyone not following the above resignation requirements will not be open to re-employment with the firm.

Wage garnishment

Should an employee owe Texas Criminal Defense Group any money at the end of their employment, Texas Criminal Defense Group will deduct the full amount owed to the firm from the employee's last paycheck. Money is considered owed in cases of theft, non-return of borrowed items, loans or advances, misappropriated client funds, or any other circumstance where economic or other any other type of gain has been realized by the employee to the detriment of the employer.

Employees in violation of office policies

If an employee is aware of another employee in violation of one or more of the policies listed in this handbook, the employee is required to inform management. Failure to do so may result in reprimand or termination.

Use of Firm Letterhead

Firm letterhead of Texas Criminal Defense Group is limited to firm related matters and other previously approved issues. All correspondence with Texas Criminal Defense Group letterhead must be authorized by an attorney. Employees should never use letterhead of Texas Criminal Defense Group for personal use.

X. COMPUTER AND INTERNET USAGE POLICY

Property of the Firm and Permitted Uses

The Computer, Internet, and Electronic-mail Systems ("Systems") are the property of Texas Criminal Defense Group and may only be used for approved work related purposes. In-Office Employees should use the computer and internet, as required for their role. Use of the computer, internet, or Systems for non work related purposes is strictly prohibited. Work-At-Home employees are required to use their personal computers and internet. The programs and email systems are property of Texas Criminal Defense Group and should only be used for work purposes.

Privacy Notice

Texas Criminal Defense Group maintains the right to access and/or monitor all calls, documents, messages, and information made and/or sent during working hours and/or within working platforms. The firm maintains the right to pursue disciplinary action as

deemed necessary for any findings of prohibited use. Prohibited use includes, but is not limited to, any violation of the firm's handbook.

Emails and electronic communication

Employees are expected to keep their work email open during all working times, thoroughly reading and responding, as required and as soon as reasonably possible. Electronic instant messages should maintain the firm expectations of appropriate, professional, and respectful.

XI. TELEPHONE USAGE POLICY

Telephone Procedures

Texas Criminal Defense Group receives a high volume of telephone calls during business hours. To better serve our clients, all work telephone calls must be answered promptly. Employees must conduct all work telephone conversations in a professional and courteous manner. All work telephone conversations will be recorded for training and quality control purposes. Employees may be reviewed from time to time based on these recordings. During business hours, employee must keep their personal cellphones on silent or vibrate mode. While Texas Criminal Defense Group understands that employees may be required to make and receive personal telephone calls while at work, please attempt to keep personal calls to a minimum.

XII. WORKER'S COMPENSATION

Coverage

Texas Criminal Defense Group has workers' compensation insurance coverage to protect you in the event of work-related injury or illness. An employee or a person acting on the employee's behalf must notify the employer of an injury or illness not later than the 30th day after the date on which the injury occurs or the date the employee knew or should have known of an illness, unless the Division of Workers' Compensation for the Texas Department of Insurance determines that good cause existed for failure to provide timely notice. Anytime an employee feels they were injured while carrying out their work duties, they should immediately notify their employer in writing. Failure to timely notify Texas

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Criminal Defense Group may potentially result in the loss of any coverage which employee may otherwise be entitled.

Opt Out

You may elect to retain your common law right of action if, no later than five days after you begin employment or within five days after receiving written notice from the employer that the employer has obtained coverage, you notify your employer in writing that you wish to retain your common law right to recover damages for personal injury. If you elect to retain your common law right of action, you cannot obtain workers' compensation income or medical benefits if you are injured.

PTO Form Request (Attorneys/Salary Employees)

Name _____ Date Submitted: _____
:

☐ Sick Date
(s): _____

☐ Bereavement Date(s): _____

Relationship: _____

☐ Vacation Date(s): _____

☐ Personal Business
Date(s): _____

Comments: _____

Approved: ☐

Denied: ☐

Employee Signature: _____

Approval Signature: _____

Request for Time Off (Hourly employees- Not Paid)

Leaving on: _____ at _____ am/pm.
(Date) (Time)

Returning on: _____ at _____ am/pm.
(Date) (Time)

Employee understands this time off is not approved until signed by a supervisor.
Employee further understands approved time off is not paid.

Submitted By: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

This request is approved _____ denied _____

Signed By: _____ Date: _____

OVERTIME APPROVAL (Hourly Employees)

Employee: _____

Date of Overtime: _____

Exact Time of Day (eg. 5:00pm to 6:00pm) _____

Total Amount of Hours: _____

Reason for Overtime: _____

Approved: _____

Date: _____

TIME ADJUSTMENT (Hourly Employees)

Employee: _____

Date of Adjustment: _____

Adjustment Needed:

Adjustment Reason :

Approved: _____

Date: _____

DISCIPLINARY NOTICE

Name of Employee _____

Job Title _____

Date of Incident _____

You are hereby given notice of discipline:

- ☐ First level discipline (documented verbal warning)
- ☐ Second level discipline (written reprimand)
- ☐ Third level discipline
 - ☐ Suspension dates _____ to _____
- ☐ Termination of employment for cause

This discipline is issued to you for unacceptable performance/conduct related to: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Absenteeism- excessive tardiness/absence; unapproved absence; no call/no show; absence on date time-off request was denied
- ☐ Insubordination: refusal of mandatory overtime; refusal to obey directives; abusive behavior towards a management representative
- ☐ Unsatisfactory performance: Incompetence; Negligence; inability to perform job duties
- ☐ Misconduct: dishonesty; dress or grooming; failure to timely report an accident; sleeping or loafing
- ☐ Other: _____

Briefly summarize the essential facts upon which this discipline is needed. Identify the specific work rules, performance or conduct standards violated:

Briefly describe the impact of the employee's performance/conduct on departmental operations:

Additional comments by Employee (if desired):

The employee's signature confirms an understanding that this form is to be filed in the employee's permanent file, and may be used in his or her annual review. It may also be used to consider grounds for termination.

Employee Signature

Date of Discipline

Supervisor Signature

| Date/Time | Activity/ Location | Total Hours/ Mileage | Total Pay | Approval Signature |
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| Signature | Printed Name | Date |
| Received by | Signature | Date |